

How much income can we have?

Gross income means income before any deductions. *Net* income means gross income after deductions. SSI and FIP households do not have to meet any income test. Households with an elderly or disabled person only have to meet a net income test. All other households must meet both a gross and net income test.

For October 1, 2008, through September 30, 2009, the monthly income limits are:

People in Household	Gross Monthly Income	Net Monthly Income
1	\$1,127	\$ 867
2	1,517	1,167
3	1,907	1,467
4	2,297	1,767
5	2,687	2,067
6	3,077	2,367
7	3,467	2,667
8	3,857	2,967
More people	\$ 390	\$ 300

You can use the Internet estimator tool to see if you may be eligible, and how much you might get. The tool is at www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov. Some libraries have computers you can use.

What are the allowable deductions?

To determine how much you can get, we use the following deductions:

- ▲ 20 percent of earned income;
- ▲ A standard deduction of \$144 or more;
- ▲ Medical expenses over \$35 a month for elderly or disabled persons;

- ▲ Certain dependent-care costs when needed for training, education, or work;
- ▲ Legally owed child support; and
- ▲ A percentage of shelter costs.

Choose foods to promote a healthy future at every stage of life.

- ▲ Food Assistance helps you to be able to buy and eat a variety of foods.
- ▲ Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.



- ▲ Aim for a healthy weight.
- ▲ Be physically active each day – at least 30 minutes for adults and 60 minutes for children.
- ▲ Choose a variety of grains (especially whole grains), fruits, and vegetables daily.

Food Assistance is a program under the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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Food Assistance Makes Iowa Stronger



What is Food Assistance?

The program helps people with little or no income to buy food for a healthy diet.

There is enough Food Assistance for everyone who is eligible.

Food Assistance helps your local economy. The Food Assistance spent in local grocery stores helps to provide jobs for people.

How do I get Food Assistance?

You must fill out a Food Assistance application and turn it in to your Department of Human Services office. You can call toll free 1-877-YES-FOOD to find out where your Department of Human Services office is located or to receive help in completing an application. You may also apply online at www.yesfood.iowa.gov.

You will be given an appointment for an interview. If you cannot come to the interview, you can send someone else or have a telephone interview. You will be asked to show proof of some things like ID, pay stubs for people in your household who work, child or adult care bills, and child-support orders.



Will I have to get a social security number?

You can choose to give us the Social Security Number of each person in your household. We can give Food Assistance only to the people who give us their Social Security Number.

You don't have to give us the Social Security Number for the people you do not want Food Assistance for.

Can legal noncitizens get Food Assistance?

Many can get Food Assistance. Even if you can't, your family members born in this country can.

Getting Food Assistance won't stop you if you want to become a citizen.

Can I get help if I'm not working?

If you can work you must not quit a job unless you have a good reason. If you live in Polk County or Scott County and don't have a job, you must look for work, take a job offer, or go to the Employment and Training Program if asked.

If you can't work because of a mental or physical reason, tell your Food Assistance worker.

How many assets can we have?

Households with a person who is disabled or age 60 or older may have up to \$3,000 in countable assets. Other households may have up to \$2,000.

Your home and the value of one vehicle do not count. Up to \$4,650 of the fair market value of one other vehicle is not counted. A vehicle used to carry a physically disabled person is not counted.

If my household is eligible, how much will we get?

For October 1, 2008, through September 30, 2009, the table below shows the most you could get if you have no income. As your income goes up, the amount of Food Assistance you will get goes down.

People in Household	Maximum Monthly Allotment
1	\$ 176
2	323
3	463
4	588
5	698
6	838
7	926
8	1,058
More people	\$132 for each

Is Food Assistance cash?

Food Assistance comes through Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT). You use a plastic EBT swipe card to buy food. Once your eligible food items have been totaled at the cash register, you will pass your EBT card through a point-of-sale (POS) terminal in the check out line. The cost of the food you purchase is subtracted from the amount in your Food Assistance EBT account.

What if I have more questions?

Please call your local Department of Human Services office. If you don't know where the office is, call the toll-free number, 1-877-YES-FOOD to find out.

You can also visit "Food Assistance" on Iowa's web site at www.dhs.state.ia.us